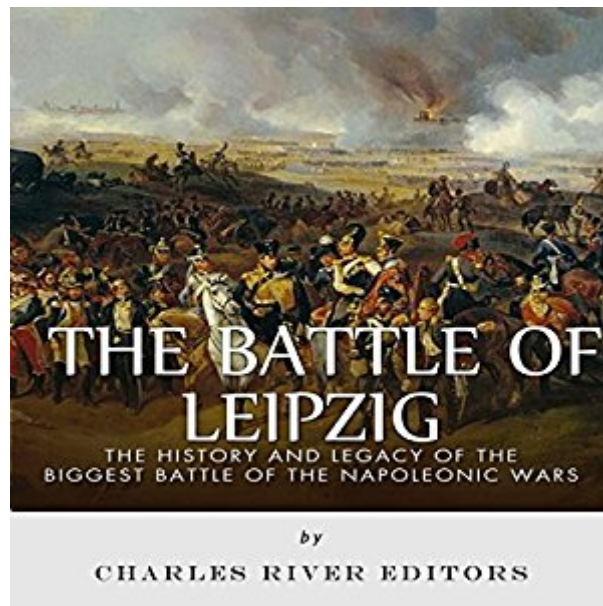


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The Battle Of Leipzig: The History And Legacy Of The Biggest Battle Of The Napoleonic Wars



Synopsis

Though Napoleon Bonaparte's unquenchable thirst for military adventurism eventually cost him both his throne and his freedom during the Napoleonic Wars of the late 18th and early 19th centuries, the French emperor was not easily defeated, even when most of Europe's nations united against him. Two military setbacks, on a scale unprecedented in history, were required before the high tide of Napoleon's success began to ebb towards the final denouement of the Hundred Days and the famous Battle of Waterloo. The incredible losses inflicted on Napoleon's Grand Armée by the ill-fated invasion of Russia in 1812 constituted the first setback that switched the Corsican's life journey from the road of success to that of defeat and exile. A huge, veteran, highly experienced force, the French Army of Napoleon perished on the rain-soaked tracks and sun-seared plains of Russia. Napoleon eventually committed over 400,000 men to his Russian project, but at the end of a relatively brief campaign, only about 40,000 men returned to Germany alive, and the Russians took some 100,000 prisoner and largely absorbed them into the Russian military or population. The remainder died, principally from starvation, but also through enemy action and the bitter cold of early winter. The failed Russian invasion set the stage for the second defeat at Leipzig, which essentially sealed the fate of Napoleon's empire. The four-day Battle of Leipzig in October 1813, romantically - but accurately - dubbed the "Battle of the Nations", proved the decisive encounter of the War of the Sixth Coalition and essentially determined the course the Napoleonic Wars took from that moment forward.

Book Information

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Customer Reviews

This Charles River short was great. It starts off showing how Napoleons Russian Campaign broke

his army before this battle. A lot of back and forth action in the cavalry battles. I also liked the different personalities of Napoleons and his opponents commanders. Excellent detail about Napoleons diplomacy as the battles went on. The best part was the narrative about the Prussian Commander Blucher pinned down French forces stopping Napoleon from reinforcing his attack. This ultimately cost Napoleon the battle. Great detail about how the coalition used a workmanlike strategy to wear Napoleon down because they knew he was a better General and they couldn't win a war of maneuver. The end of the history shows how Napoleon burned out his forces, but his legacy enabled Republics to form from Feudal Societies. Vested interests that outlived their usefulness were blown away in the Napoleonic wars and the ethic of citizenship held sway in Europe.

This little book is a very good introduction to a largely unknown battle of major importance. The author covers every aspect of this very interesting and important battle, with simple prose and excellent maps which allow the reader to closely follow the action. The author also provides before and after context which paints the picture of time and place. Overall a good introduction..

Very well written and explained. It surprised me the final comment referring to "the Napoleonic wars precluding the modern era". A great general Napoleon but he simply overreached himself.

This book details an important battle of the 19 century, which should be studied by all who like reading about history.

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